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**From the Office of
Congressman Michael E. McMahon (NY-13)**

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Member: House Transportation & Infrastructure, Foreign Affairs Committees

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 15, 2009

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**MCMAHON, SCHUMER AND ISLAND OFFICIALS CALL
FOR EPA TO IMMEDIATELY REMEDIATE FORMER SEDUTTOS SITE**

Staten Island, NY - Rep. Michael E. McMahon, Sen. Charles E. Schumer, Borough President James P. Molinaro, State Senator Diane Savino, Assemblyman Matthew Titone and New York City Council Member Ken Mitchell are calling for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to remediate the former Sedutto's Factory site in light of recent testing which showed elevated lead levels on surrounding residential and commercial properties. In a letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson dated September 14, 2009, the six officials expressed their concern and requested that the EPA immediately designate the Sedutto's site and surrounding area for emergency EPA removal action and that the work be both expedited and fully funded by the EPA.

From 1839 to 1898, the former Sedutto's Factory site at 2000 Richmond Terrace was used by John Jewett & Sons White Lead Company and then National Lead Industries to manufacture white lead. Since 2000, the site has been used as a waste transfer location, as well as a construction site for the EPA and the New York City Department of Design and Construction.

According to the September 14, 2009 letter to Administrator Jackson:

The EPA conducted testing from the backyards of homes closest to the site and from the grassy areas on sidewalks in a six-block area closest to the site, as well as other locations approximately one-quarter mile away from the site. EPA has found an average lead concentration of 549 parts per million (ppm) in the top soil of the backgrounds sampled. This level of lead is higher than the EPA screening level of 400 ppm in residential high use bare soil areas. However, the lead concentrations in the six-block area closest to the site is 666 ppm, with the lead in the background area is 788 ppm.

"For over a year, I have been working to get this site remediated because I feared exactly what the EPA's testing proved true – that the soil in neighboring properties were contaminated with lead," **said Rep. McMahon**. "The former Sedutto's site was supposed to be remediated in the 1980's. We cannot wait any longer. It is putting our neighbors, in particular our children, at

risk. I, along with Senator Schumer, Borough President Molinaro and our colleagues who represent the Island's North Shore in the NYS Senate, NYS Assembly and City Council, are asking the EPA to get this job done once and for all."

"Lead poisoning has the potential to rob our children of their future and we have to do everything in our power to ensure Staten Island residents are protected from this contamination," **Senator Schumer said.** "Whatever the cause of the lead in Port Richmond, it is essential that the EPA immediately deals with this mess so North Shore residents can be sure the lead is not harming them, their family, or their community."

"There is no question that the lead contamination at 2000 Richmond Terrace must be remediated," **said Borough President Molinaro.** "From the construction of the new Ferry Terminal and esplanade to reopening the Container Terminal, the North Shore waterfront, is experiencing a long awaited renaissance. We must address this contamination in the safest, most expeditious manner possible."

"I join my colleagues in urging the EPA to act swiftly and immediately, in order to protect our community. No child should be needlessly exposed to the threats of lead poisoning," **said Senator Savino.**

"Making sure we have a clean and healthy environment is a top priority, and therefore it is essential that elected officials at all levels of government speak with one voice to ensure that this site gets remediated as quickly as possible," **said Assemblyman Titone.**

"The EPA results, which indicate dangerously high lead levels, greatly concern me," **said Councilman Mitchell.** "This site needs to be remediated immediately and I will work with my colleagues to ensure that this happens. I also urge all residents to take advantage of the free lead testing provided by the Community Health Center of Richmond."

In May of 2008, Rep. McMahon, then a City Council Member, wrote letters to the NYC Office of Environmental Coordination, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the EPA requesting a review of the former Sedutto's site. The former Sedutto's site had been listed on the EPA's superfund list in the 1980's. Due to misinformation, the EPA engineer sent to Staten Island in 1981 to conduct an inspection could not find the site. Thus, the inspection never took place, and the EPA closed the file with no follow-up.

In response to the instigation of Rep. McMahon and community activists in May 2008, the EPA met with representatives of Rep. McMahon's office, Borough President Molinaro, Councilman Mitchell and community activists and leaders in April 2009 to discuss the EPA's remediation of the Sedutto site.

Councilman Mitchell, who worked extensively on this project when he was chief of staff to then-Council Member McMahon, coordinated with the NYC Department of Health and Community Health Center of Richmond to organized free lead screenings for any resident who was concerned about exposure.

In response to the recent lead levels found on the neighboring properties, all six officials urge any Staten Islander who is concerned about their health to take advantage of these free screenings.

A copy of the letter to Administrator Jackson is attached to this release.

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 14, 2009

The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

As you are probably aware, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently tested for and found extremely high levels of lead at both the site of the old Sedutto's Ice Cream Factory at 2000 Richmond Terrace in Staten Island, New York, and a number of surrounding residential properties. These discoveries are of great concern not only to the people who are being exposed to the lead, but to all of us as well. Therefore, we are writing to urge the EPA to immediately take two steps to protect the public health, welfare and the environment of the people we represent: (1) identify both the 2000 Richmond Terrace location and the entire contaminated surrounding area eligible for an emergency EPA removal action, and (2) to fully fund and expedite the lead clean-up for the area of contamination - including all surrounding residential and commercial properties.

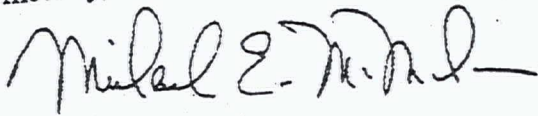
From 1839 to 1898, 2000 Richmond Terrace was used by John Jewett & Sons White Lead Company to manufacture white lead. National Lead Industries purchased the business and subsequently operated at that location, until a major fire destroyed the plant's main building and storage house in the 1920s. Between 1949 and 1990, various businesses operated at the location, including the Sedutto's Ice Cream Factory. However, after several fires at the site in the 1990s, the site was cleared in 2000. Since that time, the site has been used as a waste transfer location, as well as a construction site for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the New York City Department of Design and Construction.

Recent studies have found alarmingly high levels of lead contamination both at the site itself and in the surrounding areas. EPA conducted testing from the backyards of homes closest to the site and from the grassy areas on sidewalks in a six-block area closest to the site, as well as other locations approximately one-quarter mile away from the site. EPA has found an average lead concentration of 549 parts per million (ppm) in the top soil of the backgrounds sampled. This level of lead is higher than the EPA screening level of 400 ppm in residential high use bare soil areas. However, the lead concentrations in the six-block area closest to the site is 666 ppm, with the lead in the background area is 788 ppm.

Our friends and neighbors are being threatened by the toxic contamination in their homes, and in the neighborhood where they live and work. As you know well, lead exposure can lead to learning disabilities, low IQ, behavioral disorders and kidney disease. People should not be exposed to such threats, nor should they be burdened with the extraordinary clean-up costs of lead remediation from the community.

The EPA must address this serious and known threat to public health with swift action. So we again urge the EPA to take all necessary efforts to initiate a removal action to clean up not only the former National Lead Factory site, but all areas in the surrounding community that have been contaminated with toxic lead. Please contact Patrick Hyland, District Director for Congressman Michael E. McMahon at (718) 351-1062 or Patrick.Hyland@mail.house.gov to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,



Michael E. McMahon
Member of Congress



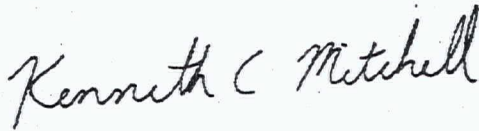
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



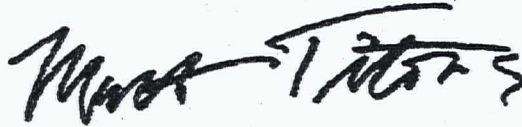
James P. Molinaro
Borough President
Staten Island, New York



Diane I. Savino
New York State Senator



Kenneth Mitchell
Member
New York City Council



Matthew J. Titone
Member
New York State Assembly